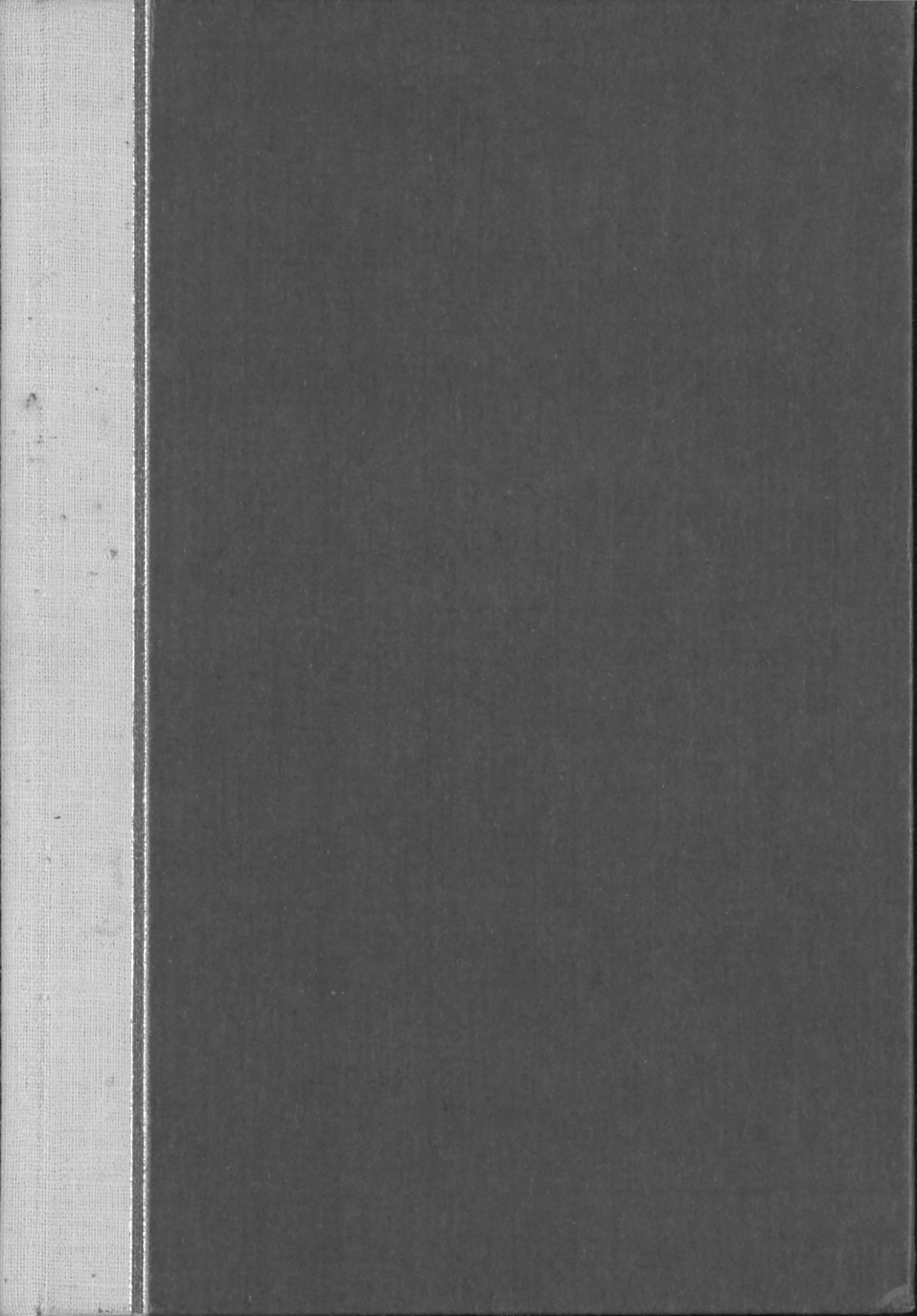


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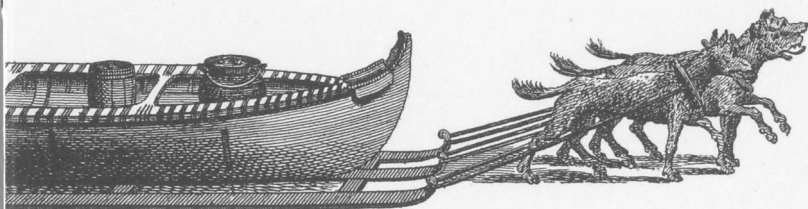
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1955

PETER POND

Fur Trader & Explorer

by Henry R. Wagner



Yale University Library

1955

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CONTENTS

Introduction	I
--------------	---

The Documents	57
---------------	----

*The following maps are included as
separate sheets, boxed with the volume:*

- 1. Map presented to Congress*
- 2. Map presented to Lord Hamilton*
- 3. Map prepared for the Empress of Russia*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THANKS are due to Mrs. H. A. Innis for permission to quote from her husband's *Peter Pond, Fur Trader and Adventurer*, Toronto, 1930; to Mr. J. B. Brebner for permission to quote from his *The Explorers of North America, 1492-1806*, New York, 1933; to the Dominion Archives of Canada for permission to reproduce documents printed in the text and Map No. 2; the Public Record Office, London, for permission to print documents and Map No. 3, and to the Bibliothèque du Service Hydrographique de la Marine, Paris, for permission to reproduce Map No. 1.

INTRODUCTION

PETER POND has long been a controversial figure in the exploration of the Canadian Northwest. He was born in Milford, Connecticut, on January 18, 1740, the son of another Peter Pond who was later in the fur trade, probably at Detroit. In 1756, at the outbreak of the French and Indian War, Peter enlisted in a Connecticut regiment to assist in the proposed conquest of Canada by a large force of British troops sent out for that purpose. The young man served in three or four campaigns against the French in the neighborhood of Fort Ticonderoga. He was probably not present at the capture of Montreal but arrived there a few days later. All this is well told in his own journal, which was published in the *Connecticut Magazine*.¹

After the close of the war Peter is supposed to have made a voyage to the West Indies and there is some evidence that he made another one several years later. He decided to go into the trade of the Northwest in partnership with a man named Gra-

1. Vol. X, No. 2, 1906, pp. 239-59; with an Introduction by Mrs. Nathan Gillett Pond, pp. 235-36, and an article entitled "Connecticut adventurer was a founder of famous northwest fur trust in 1783" by R. W. McLachlan of Montreal, Canada, pp. 236-37.

ham in New York who, no doubt, supplied the money for the enterprise. Pond went from New York to Montreal to procure goods not obtainable in New York, and then went to Michilimackinac. From here he went by way of Green Bay, the Fox and Wisconsin rivers to the Mississippi. This he crossed. Later he returned to Prairie du Chien where he made his headquarters for the next few years. From this base he went up the Mississippi to St. Peter's River (now the Minnesota River) where he obtained many furs. These he left at an Indian lodge in charge of a young man and returned to Prairie du Chien. In the following year he returned to the St. Peter's River where he found his furs intact.

The country around Prairie du Chien was occupied by the Chippewa Indians. These Indians, Pond says, had come to the river about forty years before. They were supplied with firearms by traders on the Mississippi. On the opposite bank were the Sioux who frequently attempted to conquer the Chippewa but lacked firearms. This more or less constant warfare troubled Pond who finally induced some of the chiefs of both tribes to accom-

pany him to Mackinac Island for the purpose of making a peaceable arrangement there. In this he was successful and in 1775 such an arrangement was concluded but Pond did not return to the Mississippi River. Instead, he decided to enter the fur trade in the Canadian Northwest.

Pond's interesting journal ceases, however, with the conclusion of the Treaty at Mackinac and our information of him in later years is almost completely derived from contemporary sources or his own maps.

It may be worthy of notice that the breaking off of Pond's journal in 1775 corresponds more or less with the breaking out of the American Revolution. Mrs. Nathan Gillett Pond, who discovered the journal in the home of the former governor of Connecticut, Charles Hobby Pond, tells us that some pages had been torn off at the end of the manuscript. I am doubtful that many pages were lost.

The American Revolution was perhaps the reason for Pond's determination to enter the fur business in the Northwest territory of Canada. At any rate he had served under the British flag from 1756 to practically 1790. He seems, however, to have been

recognized as an American by his associates, most of whom were Scotch. It was not until he left Canada that aspersions were cast on his character and his loyalty to the British Crown was questioned.

The chronology of Pond's various expeditions subsequent to 1775 is here briefly given. As we have no statements of his concerning this period the principal source is his maps. H. A. Innis, in his work² on Pond suggests that when he decided to leave the Mississippi River and go to the Northwest he had made some sort of a contract with the Montreal fur traders, Alexander Henry Sr., Cadotte, the Frobishers, James Finlay, McGill, Patterson, Holmes and Grant. There is no reason so far as I can see to warrant this supposition. I believe the two parties simply joined forces without any previous agreement.

Alexander Henry Sr., in his extremely interesting account of his travels³ tells us of meeting Mr. Pond on August 18, 1775, at the mouth of the

2. *Peter Pond, Fur Trader and Adventurer* (Toronto, 1930).

3. *Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territory between the years 1760 and 1776*. In Two Parts. New York: I. Riley, 1809.

Winnipeg River where he joined him. On September 7 they were overtaken by Joseph and Thomas Frobisher and on October 1, together with other traders who joined them, crossed the bay to Winnipeg Island and then ascended the Saskatchewan River. The party broke up after reaching Cumberland House, the Hudson's Bay Company post. Pond went to Fort Dauphin, at the northwest corner of Lake Dauphin in $52\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ N. Lat., just east of the 100th meridian. (Pond places it too far west on his maps.) Pond also went to Cedar Lake, Lake Winnipegosis, and traveled the full length of Mossy River and back to Lake Dauphin where he wintered. Here he could intercept the Indians going to trade at the Hudson's Bay Company's Cumberland House and here also was plenty of buffalo meat. Innis submits a conjecture that in 1776 Pond went to Michilimackinac and arranged to have the next season's goods brought to Grand Portage. Pond's maps of 1785 show that he now wintered for two years at the junction of the Sturgeon River and the North Saskatchewan, a short distance from the forks. Probably he had four canoes and sixteen men. In the Introduction to Alexander Mackenzie's *Voy-*

ages⁴ the spring of 1778 is described as follows:

The success of this gentleman [Thomas Frobisher in 1777 at Isle à la Crosse] induced others to follow his example and in the spring of the year 1778 some of the traders on the Saskatchewan River, finding they had a quantity of goods to spare, agreed to put them into a joint stock, and gave the charge and management of them to Peter Pond who, in four canoes, was directed to enter the English River, so-called by Mr. Frobisher, to follow his track, and proceed still further; if possible to Athabaska, a country hitherto unknown but from an Indian report. In this enterprise he [Pond] at length succeeded, and pitched his tent on the Elk River, by him erroneously called the Athabaska River, about forty miles from the Lake of the Hills [Athabaska Lake] into which it empties itself.

Here he passed the winter of 1778-79; saw a vast concourse of the Knisteneaux [Cree] and Chepewyan tribes, who used to carry their

4. (London, 1801), "A General History of the Fur Trade," pp. xii-xiii.

furs annually to Churchill, the latter by the barren grounds, where they suffered innumerable hardships and were sometimes even starved to death. The former followed the course of the lakes and rivers, through a country that abounded in animals, and where there was plenty of fish; but though they did not suffer from want of food, the intolerable fatigue of such a journey could not be easily repaid to an Indian. They were therefore highly gratified by seeing people come to their country to relieve them from such long and toilsome journeys; and were immediately reconciled to give an advanced price for the articles necessary to their comfort and convenience. Mr. Pond's reception and success was accordingly beyond his expectations, and he procured twice as many furs as his canoes would carry. They also supplied him with as much provisions as he required for his homeward voyage. Such of the furs as he could not embark, he secured in one of his winter huts and they were found the following season, in the same state in which he left them.

Innis⁵ found in the Askin papers in the Detroit Public Library two references to a Mr. Pond, presumably Peter Pond (although probably there were other people named Pond in the Northwest). These references seem to prove that he now came down to Mackinac. The first is dated "Mackinac, November 26, 1780," and the other is "May 10, 1781."

The actual evidence lends credence to these two entries. On Pond's various maps no references can be found to his residence in the fur country itself in 1780, and on the map of Ezra Stiles 1780 had been entered and then crossed off. It seems probable that for some unknown reason Pond went from Grand Portage to Mackinac in 1780 where he remained until practically the middle of 1781. Pond was then appointed the representative of McBeath, Ellice & Co., in conjunction with Mr. Jean Etienne Waden, and Pond wintered with him at Lac la Ronge. According to the sworn testimony of a voyageur,⁶ Waden was shot in the leg below the knee in March, 1782, and died shortly afterward. Pond

5. H. A. Innis, "Peter Pond in 1780" in *The Canadian Historical Review*, December 1928, Vol. IX, No. 4, p. 333.

6. Joseph Fagniant de Berthier, Waden's clerk.

wintered at Isle à la Crosse Lake in 1782 and 1783, as his maps of 1785 show, and then probably went to Athabasca, where he spent the winter of 1783 and 1784, as the last date on the key to his Congress map is "at Arabosca, March 15, 1784."⁷

When Pond came out in 1784, he probably went directly to Grand Portage where Joseph Frobisher and Simon McTavish had come from Montreal. They brought Pond an offer of one share in the Northwest Company which had been newly organized with sixteen shares. (Document I) Pond was dissatisfied with this offer and probably decided to go to Montreal to take the matter up there. He was accompanied perhaps by Peter Pangman who had not been offered a share in the Company. Pond and Pangman seem to have been promised support by Gregory and McLeod, but it is probable that Pond did not remain in Montreal and went soon to the United States.

Mr. A. J. H. Richardson (Head of the Map Division, Public Archives of Canada) informs me that he has seen a "List of English inhabitants" in the

7. British Museum Add. Ms. 15332 e.

List of Inhabitants in Montreal in January, 1785, which contains the name of Peter Pond.⁸ There is nothing improbable about this as Pond still had plenty of time to travel to New York where, on March 1, he presented to Congress his first known map, probably with a memorial, or key, which in its present form is in French, a copy made by St. John de Crèvecoeur, who was then French consul in New York. There will always be a question as to Pond's motives in presenting his map and memorial to Congress. The memorial confidently asserts that he has discovered a passage to the sea of the Northwest and the map was obviously made for American consumption, as it extends to 30° N. Lat., farther south than any other of Pond's maps. Whether or not Pond hoped for support from the new government it is now impossible to say.

Probably meeting with no encouragement from Congress he then returned to Montreal where some proceedings were being taken in regard to the alleged murder of Waden. Whether Pond was present or not at this hearing we do not know but nothing

8. Public Archives of Canada, R.G. 4, A1, S Series, Internal Corr., Province of Quebec, Vol. 21, p. 7 (verso).

came of the matter.⁹ Perhaps the deposition made in May 1783 by Joseph Fagniant was heard. P 10, n. 6
Waden's wife seems to have been instrumental in bringing on these proceedings.

Pond had an interview with Henry Hamilton, Lieutenant Governor of the province some time before the 4th of April.¹⁰ The cordial reception accorded Pond by Hamilton makes fairly certain that the Waden hearing was never held or was quashed. Hamilton wrote an enthusiastic letter to the Colonial Office in London (Document II), dated April 9, about the interview. This letter contains some interesting information worthwhile to recapitulate here.

9. Pond's clerk was Toussaint Le Sieur. Public Archives of Canada, R.G. 1, E15A, Public Accounts of the Province of Quebec, 1785, Part II, includes a bill by J. B. Flaman, bailiff of the District of Montreal, dated March 21, 1785, "*pour prandre toussint LeSieur,*" in execution of a King's Bench Warrant dated March 11. The same bill includes the expense of summoning the witness "joseph fagnien" and the bill is further described as being "for summoning Joseph Fagniant to attend as witness against Peter Pond and Antoine LeSieur, for murder, and for apprehending the said Antoine LeSieur."

10. Letter of Benjamin Frobisher to Lieutenant Governor Henry Hamilton, Montreal, April 4, 1785, appreciative of Hamilton's "attention" to Pond, Public Archives of Canada, R.G. 4, A21, S Series, Vol. 21, Internal Corr. of Province of Quebec, page 40, a-d. (Photostat)

Hamilton states that Pond had met two men in New York who had accompanied Capt. Cook on his third voyage, one of whom was Simeon Woodruffe. The other I have not been able to identify. These men told Pond about the preparations being made in Boston for sending out two ships to Nootka Sound. These were undoubtedly the *Lady Washington* and the *Columbia*, which left Boston for the Northwest Coast in 1786. At this interview with Hamilton Pond presented a map which contains some information from the account of Cook's voyage.

While in Montreal Pond presented to Hamilton a memorial dated April 18, 1785. (Document III) This memorial is in effect a petition by the Northwest Company to obtain a monopoly of the fur trade in the Northwest. It bears Pond's name and states that he is a member of the Northwest Company. So far as I can ascertain Pond's efforts to obtain the monopoly were not successful, but before leaving he became a charter member of the Beaver Club founded in that year.¹¹

11. This Club consisted originally of nineteen members confined to those who had spent at least two winters in the wilds of the Northwest.

Pond went back to Grand Portage in 1785 and in the following Spring returned to Athabasca, where he was busy organizing the district for the Northwest Company. It is probable that John Ross and Laurent Leroux had preceded Pond to the Athabasca Country in the previous year in order to compete with him. During the winter of 1786-1787 competition between Ross and Pond became more intense and in the early part of June, 1787, it was learned that Mr. Ross "had been shot in a scuffle with Mr. Pond's men."¹²

In 1787 an amalgamation was arranged at Grand Portage between the small traders and the Northwest Company. Alexander Mackenzie received one share and was appointed to replace Pond in the management of the Athabasca district, as Pond wanted to carry on his explorations.

During this period Pond explored the Northwest practically as far as the Rocky Mountains which confronted him from Athabasca. At that time Athabasca was the greatest source of beaver re-

12. "Reminiscences of Roderick Mackenzie" in L. F. R. Masson's *Les Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest; recits de Voyages*, . . . Quebec, 1889-1890.

maining in the Northwest territories and Pond was a highly successful trader.

As soon as Alexander Mackenzie had appeared at Pond's fort on the Elk River Pond left for the North. By July Pond was at the Great Slave Lake which lies in the Mackenzie Basin. Here he spent much time exploring and he may even have reached the source of the Mackenzie River as it leaves the lake at its western end. Thus he was able to give Mackenzie its exact location in 62° N. Latitude. The fact that the river afterward called the Mackenzie leaves the lake in a westerly direction is thus shown on Pond's maps of 1787.

That Mackenzie had learned this from Pond is evident from his letter to Lord Dorchester on November 17, 1794. He wrote he had followed "the course of the waters which had been reported by Mr. Pond to fall into Cook's river, but they led me to the Northern ocean." This convinces me that Pond did not know that the river changed its course from west to north and gave him the idea that it flowed into the Pacific rather than the Arctic, in which he was not interested. Mackenzie named the river Disappointment. What was he

disappointed about? Because the river ran into the Arctic instead of the Pacific as Pond had advised him. (Since writing this I find the same idea has been put forward by Dr. Grace Lee Nute.)¹³

There are several references in Pond's remarks and in letters of others that he was preparing maps to lay before the Empress of Russia. The maps dated July and December, 1787, were undoubtedly made for that purpose. The remarks at the end of Isaac Ogden's letter (Document IV) show plainly that Pond had charged Mackenzie with the duty of presenting his map to the Empress of Russia when he reached that country, as Pond expected him to do. The map of December 6, 1787, is presumably the last map of Pond's extant. Mackenzie did not like Pond, possibly because he owed too much to him and did not want to acknowledge it. I think it probable that Pond gave Mackenzie all the information he possessed about the country. On May 15, 1788, Pond left it and went to Montreal and Quebec never to return to the Northwest. In 1789 Mackenzie made his now famous voyage to

13. "A Peter Pond Map," *Minnesota History Magazine* (March 1933), Vol. 14, No. 1.

the mouth of the Mackenzie River where he erected a post on Whale Island "on which I engraved the latitude of the place, my own name, the number of persons which I had with me, and the time we remained there."¹⁴ The exact location of the mouth of the river is Lat. $68^{\circ} 50' N.$ and Long. $135^{\circ} 30' W.$ Mackenzie returned to the fort 102 days after he had departed on his voyage.

Pond had also speculated on the distance from his fort in Athabasca to the Pacific Coast and had no doubt communicated his calculations, or more likely guesses, to Mackenzie, who a few years later returned from England and undertook a journey to the West Coast by way of Peace River. Mackenzie's voyage was one of the most remarkable on record. This is not the place to discuss it but he finally reached the Bella Coola River which empties into an arm of the Pacific.

In the meantime Pond had retired from the fur trade. His reasons are not known but probably his age, now nearly fifty years, was the impelling one. While in Quebec in October or November, 1789, Pond had had several conversations with Isaac Ogden probably with the map of December 6,

14. He does not give the latitude in his book.

1787, before them. Ogden wrote the substance of these conversations to his father, David Ogden, in London. It was in this letter that Ogden explained what Pond had told him about his theory regarding the connection of the Mackenzie River with Cook's River. (Document IV) David Ogden sent a copy of part of this letter to Evan Nepean and it was published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for March 1790, with a map reputed to have been drawn by Pond but more likely to have been drawn from one of Pond's maps.

Pond had been an extremely successful fur trader and should have accumulated a fair amount of capital but no one seems to have learned how much it amounted to and the general impression is that it was very small. He sold his share in the Northwest Company to William McGillivray for 800 pounds and left Canada early in 1790.

We next find Pond in Milford in March, 1790. On March 10 he visited Ezra Stiles, the President of Yale College, who records their interview as follows:¹⁵

15. Dexter, Franklin Bowditch, *ed.* The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, D.D., LL.D., President of Yale College (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901), 3 vols. Vol. III, pp. 383, 385.

March 10, 1790. On Monday last visited me Capt. Peter Pond of Milford who has been 17 y. on his Traveles in the Indian Countries in the N.W. parts of America. He has a House & settlement in the 60th Deg. of N. Lat. 30 days Journey West of Hudsons Bay & he has been within six days travel [sic] of the grand Pacific Ocean or the western side of N^o America. The Indians there have long black Hair, & almost beardless Features. Their settlements & Populⁿ in the same sparse scattered manner as in N. Engld. He judges not one hundred Thous^d souls Indians in all North America.

March 24 Capt. Peter Pond of Milf^d spent this Aft. & Even^g with me. He left Milf^d April 1773 & spent almost 17 years in the Indian Trade Countries N.W. of Miscilimakinak & Lake Superior. He resided three years at [Prairie du Chien and for some time] on Lake [Great Slave Lake?] in 64th deg. of N^o Lat^d which he observed by a Quadrant. He shewed me a large map of his own Construction. He gave me much Information;: Tho he never saw Ten Thous^d Souls Indians in all his

Travels. The Ratio of Indian populⁿ & Sachemdoms in the interior Parts over to the Pacific Ocean & Asia much the same as this side L. Superior. The same sort of People—almost beardless—Above twenty Factories or Indian Trad^g Houses for Furr Trade beyond L. Sup. & almost over to the Ocean. In 64th Deg. Lat. Fahr. Ther. at 40° deg. below Cypher coldest & 100 highest—The Name of the evil Spirit Manito or Manit or Manit-to as among all the Indian Nations across the Continent Eastw^d to Narraganset & the Atlantic—Paint Rocks & stones & offer Tobacco &c. to them as Manitoos or Semblances of Symbols of evil Spirits. Believe in a good Spirit but have little to do with him—are great Dealers with familiar Spirits and Spectres from whom they receive oracular Responses & prophecies:—Have some seasons of Feasting and smoke tobacco, but in 64th Deg. no Primitiae of Corn because they raise none, but live on Meat alone without Bread or Pulse of any kind. Evidently much the same pole as East^d or N. Eng. Indians. They were

well & familiarly acquainted with the Pacific Ocean and a hyperborean or Artic Ocean. He heard of Capt Cooks Voyage & his Touch^g on the Western side of America & of Mr. Hearings [Hearne's] travel from Church's [Churchill] or Hudson's Bay up to the northern Ocean. Capt Pond doubts not there is a Passage by water round the N^o of Asia from Nova Zembla [North of Norway] to Kamchatka.

In January 1792, Pond was appointed a special agent to the Indians (Document VI) with special duties as outlined in a document in the American State Papers. It is common knowledge that Pond never got beyond Niagara on this mission and whether he effected anything with the Indians is not known to me at least. He received \$800 on departing in order to defray his expenses and was promised liberal rewards if successful. That he was not successful is very certain. The Indians had been stirred up all through the northwest territory by their victorious battle against St. Clair in November of the previous year and were in no mood to talk peace.

It seems unlikely that Pond returned from this mission in time to meet Dr. Theophylact Bache in New York in March, 1792, to discuss membership in a company which was then forming in Montreal in opposition to the Northwest Company. Mr. John Howard wrote to Pond on November 13, 1791, informing him of his plan and inviting him to come to New York in the following March to discuss it. This letter was found by Dr. W. Kaye Lamb, Dominion Archivist of Canada.

James H. Perkins in his *Annals of the West*¹⁶ states that Pond, when acting as Indian Agent for the United States Government, could not get beyond Niagara. Niagara and Detroit were still in the possession of the British and were not turned over to the United States until 1796, after the Jay treaty. The British Government held on to these posts First, on the grounds of the debts of the colonists, which were still due, and Second, as the United States had not reimbursed the Loyalists for the property which had been confiscated during the Revolution.

It has been asserted by many writers that Pond

16. Cincinnati, 1847.

had some connection with fixing the boundary between Canada and the United States. If this was the case it must have been at the time just preceding the Jay Treaty of 1794, although I find no record of his having held any position or having any official connection with the fixing of the boundary and L. F. R. Masson¹⁷ states that "Pond placed his knowledge of the country at the disposition of the American Commission who, in 1793, had been authorised to mark the boundary from the Great Lakes, and it was Pond himself who pointed out the line to the west of Lake Superior which was definitely accepted."

In spite of the Treaty of Paris of 1783, the British Government had refused to give up the posts which they had then in the United States territory, north of the boundary line as fixed at 49°, and Jefferson, as Secretary of State, had had this burden on his mind for some time. According to him the British made an attempt to move the boundary south far enough to include the sources of the Mississippi. If any organization existed in 1791 or 1792 which was engaged in fixing the

17. Op.Cit. Footnote.

boundary on the ground to confirm its fixing on paper, I doubt that Pond had anything to do with it. A few years later when the Jay treaty was concluded the boundary was fixed so as to include Grand Portage in the United States. It is possible that in 1792 Pond, having been unable to proceed any farther than Niagara, may have gone to Grand Portage and thus become involved in the boundary fixing proceedings. We have no definite information about him after he had reached Niagara. We only know he died in 1807 in Milford. His journal is generally supposed to have been written some time after 1800, when he returned to Milford, but the minuteness of the entries hardly warrants such a supposition. It appears to me to be more like a day by day journal.

Pond had been married in Milford, probably in 1762, to Susanna Newell, by whom he had at least two children. His son, Peter Pond the third, was born in 1763, and his daughter, Elizabeth, probably before he left Milford in 1765.¹⁸ Both children married into the Durand family, some-

18. *Connecticut Magazine*, *op. cit.* Note 1 of this article. pp. 161-176, "The Ponds of Milford," Vol. X.

where in the West Indies, probably Barbados, and the son died there in 1813.

The Maps of Peter Pond

None of Peter Pond's original maps has been found up to this time. Several maps have survived which are either supposed to be or are copies of Pond's original maps. The subject is a very complex one and Mr. A. J. H. Richardson, head of the map division of the Public Archives of Canada, has devoted considerable time to studying the various maps which have been copied from Pond's original maps, and has been of great assistance to me in this work.

It must be borne in mind that we must rely for an account of Pond's movements largely on his contemporaries and his notations on his various maps. These maps give us practically the only reliable account of his activities in the Northwest. It is therefore necessary to trace his movements as far as possible from the maps which he has left behind.

One of the accusations made against Pond was

that he attempted a task for which he had little or no preparation. He had made two voyages to the West Indies during which he learned to calculate latitude. In later years his observations for latitudes were not very far off, showing he had a nautical almanac and he undoubtedly had a quadrant or sextant, and one writer states he had four chronometers, obviously to calculate longitude. At this time this was the usual method for calculating longitude but his chronometers must have been out of order as his calculations for longitude are entirely incorrect and were sometimes as much as twenty degrees in error too high.

We have three basic maps of Pond, two of which were originally drawn while he was in Athabasca in 1784. No. 1 is the copy of the map presented to Congress dated March 1, 1785. This exists in three copies, originally made by St. John de Crèvecoeur, and another copy which is in another hand, probably that of the Marquis de Barbé-Marbois or a copyist designated by him. Two of the Crèvecoeur copies are in the British Museum and were purchased at the Barbié de Bocage sale of November 9, 1844 (they are B.M. 15332 c and B.M. 15332 d).

The third Crèvecoeur copy is in the Bibliothèque du Service Hydrographique de la Marine in Paris (Ms. 4044-B, No. 30). Crèvecoeur wrote he copied the map while he was French Consul in New York to send it to the Duc de Rochefoucauld-Liancourt. Because Pond's maps were too cluttered with legends the copyist perhaps placed numbers on the map and a document or key with legends bearing the corresponding numbers accompanies the maps in the British Museum (B.M. Add. MSS. 15332 e).

The copy of this same Pond map from Barbé-Marbois is in the Service Géographique of the Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris (No. 7430) and bears a different title than the Crèvecoeur copies. The title is in French, the legends are in English.

The original of this map has disappeared and it exists only in these copies which are basically the same. They all extend from 30° to 65° N. Lat. and show a river flowing directly north from Great Slave Lake and emptying into the Mer du Nord Ouest. As Pond had never been in this region it seems possible he meant this for the Coppermine River of Hearne as to the east of Pond's River no

river is shown. It is perfectly obvious from an examination of this map that it was intended for American consumption as it extends as far south as the Gulf of California and covers so much territory that Pond had never seen.

Basic Map No. 2 also exists only in copies without key, although numbers have been placed on the map. The earliest one is in the Public Record Office, London (C.O. 42, 47, Map MPG 425). The original of this map was presented by Pond to Lord Hamilton at their interview shortly before April 4, 1785. Hamilton later sent it to England. This map extends only as far south as 40° N. Lat. and west to 155° . Because of the detailed notations on this map, such as the length of the portages, I believe that this copy adheres more closely to Pond's original than any of the other copies of his maps extant.

We know that Pond was preparing a map to lay before the Empress of Russia as Patrick Small states in his letter of February 24, 1788. This is Basic Map No. 3. There seem to be two copies of these maps, one dated in July, 1787, and the other, the latest, December 6 of the same year. The July,

1787, map bears the stamp of the Royal Engineers of Canada and that of December 6, 1787, is stamped "Her Majesty's State Paper Office." Both photo-stats were sent to me by Mr. W. Kaye Lamb, Dominion Archivist of the Public Archives of Canada.

The map of July, 1787, shows "Nootka or King George's Sound" and is the first of Pond's maps to show the name Nootka. All the others name it simply King George's Sound. This map extends south to 40° and west to 265° W. Long. [85° E. Long.]. It contains a copy of part of Cook's map of the North Pacific and also shows the Mackenzie River, unnamed, in almost its direct course as it leaves the Great Slave Lake until it turns toward the North. Here it is broken off. Above it is the legend "A Great Waterfall." There is only a little over one degree of longitude between the place where the Mackenzie River is broken off and Cook's River [Cook's Inlet] ends.

A copy of a portion of Pond's July, 1787, map was made by Ezra Stiles in March, 1790. Stiles' map covers the territory only as far south as 50° N. Lat. and west to 130° . I believe he copied the July,

1787, map because his map also bears the name Nootka which, as I have said above, appears on no other Pond map. There is a curious feature on the Stiles map which seems to have escaped notice. The dates 1780, 1781, 1782 and 1783 appear just south of the Great Slave Lake. Of course, Pond was not that far north during these years. Stiles has crossed out the year 1780. This year is one of uncertainty as we have no direct knowledge where Pond was, but we suppose he was in Detroit. Although Stiles has placed this sequence of dates too far north, his crossing out the 1780 may have been significant as to some doubt in his own mind as to where Pond was in that year.

Another map which was probably based on Pond's July, 1787, map, although not a copy of it, is that published in *The Gentleman's Magazine* for March, 1790. This also bears the name Nootka and accompanies the publication of the extract of Isaac Ogden's letter to his father (Document IV).

The other map of 1787 which is dated December 6 is a copy of the so-called "Tin Case Map" sent by Lord Dorchester on November 23, 1790. This map is the same shape and size as the July map and

covers much the same territory, but curiously enough does not bear the name Nootka. Mr. Richardson of the Public Archives of Canada, who has so kindly assisted me in describing Pond's maps, believes this to be a copy of the last map drawn by Pond while in the Northwest.

Mr. Richardson suggests there may be a fourth basic map prepared by Pond before the others. He bases this idea on the remark by David Thompson that "shortly after my departure (from London) some maps drawn by the fur traders of Canada had been seen by Mr. Dalrymple which showed the rivers and lakes for many hundred miles to the westward of Hudson's Bay."¹⁹ If such a map was made by Pond it could have been used by Franklin for his negotiations of the Treaty of Paris of 1783, but I am unable to agree with Mr. Richardson's assumption as Thompson's allusion is vague, Thompson's statements are notoriously inaccurate, and I find no other record of it.

19. J. B. Tyrrell, *David Thompson's Narrative* (Toronto, Champlain Society, 1916), pp. 27-9, 172-3.

*Characterization of Pond by
Contemporary and Later Writers*

At the time that Pond had entered the fur trade the American colonies were still part of Great Britain, and he was of course only a colonial, as the British usually called the inhabitants of the American colonies. There can hardly be any doubt that Pond was disliked by practically every member of the Northwest Company engaged in the fur trade in the Northwest. After the Declaration of Independence and the consequent separation from Great Britain, Pond became a "foreigner" to all his associates and therefore incurred their hostility, if he had not already had it. This probably accounts for the remarks of his various associates. David Thompson, who probably never knew Pond but who perhaps obtained most of his information from Patrick Small, his father-in-law, describes Pond as "a person of industrious habits, a good common school education and a violent man of unprincipled character."²⁰

We have a very interesting letter of Small's, who

20. Tyrrell, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

was Pond's superior. The references to Pond are of such importance I reproduce it here.

Ile à la Crosse | 24th Feb. [1788]

To Mr. Simon McTavish

Dear Sir:

I have written to the New Company concerning all the transactions of this place and have likewise written the Old Company a statement of our summer affairs to accompany Mr. Pond's letters and papers relative to the Slave Lake, to which I beg leave to refer you. I observe what you say in yours of the 22 July regarding Mr. Mackenzie & I contradicting [*sic*] the additional order for the English River. I shall pay particular attention to the respective accounts of the two concerns of men and goods put into the general stock.

Mr. Pond's letter of the 3d of December was some time before Mr. Mackenzie left Atabasca. He left it suddenly—which was the cause Mr. Pond did not write me by him. I am quite surprised at the wild ideas Mr. Pond has of matters which Mr. Mackenzie told me were incomprehensibly extravagant. I wrote him, in answer to his of the

3rd Dec., as satisfactorily as I could. I observed to him he could have no reason to think that anything was even thought of contrary to the mutual interest of all concerned. I put it in his option to go with or after the packs, but represented to him that he required to be expeditious, if he intended returning after seeing the Grand Portage.^{20a} He is preparing a fine map to lay before the Empress of Russia.

.
I am Dear Sir most sincerely

Pat: Small²¹

Note in this connection the reference herein to Pond's "letters and papers." Where are they?

One of the most violent attacks on Pond was made by Alexander Dalrymple who had no official connection with the fur trade but was hydrographer of the East India Company. He wrote a

20a. Obviously, Small did not expect Pond to leave the company.

21. Public Archives of Canada, M.G. 19, C.1, Masson Collection, No. 32, Vol. 2, "Memoirs of Mackenzie," p. 179.

Memorandum on the Route for Discoveries February 2, 1790. After discussing the possibilities of a route north of America through the Arctic he comes to Pond whom he characterizes in the following words: "By Hudson's Bay the discoverers would profit by the information of Mr. Turnor whom the Hudson's Bay Company have sent into those parts and from whose Astronomical abilities we may reasonably expect competent Information, whereas Peter Pond's allegation (as reported by Mr. Holland) that the Observations of the Latitude in his last journey agreed to a second with the positions in his former map 'Laid down by Estimation,' betrays his ignorance and impudence and invalidates any Reports coming from him.

"Supposing some person of knowledge and veracity to be sent with him it is probable Pond *would hide* that Person as is at present alledged of a person whose merits raised his jealousy.

"It is also to be considered that Pond is a native of the United States, and cannot therefore be deemed to be attached to this Country. He also pretends to the Sovereignty of the Lands adjacent to the Arathapeskow Lake, so that by encouraging

him we may be fostering a Viper in our bosom.”²²

I have never discovered in any of Pond's writings or maps any suggestion that he sought the sovereignty of any part of the Northwest. There are several inferences in the correspondence of the times that Pond intended to publish a map or in one case had published some account of the country in which he had lived so long. Such a statement occurs in Lord Dorchester's letter addressed to Lord Grenville:²³

Quebec 23d November 1790

No. 78

Sir,

I transmit a Sketch of the North Western parts of this Continent, communicated by Peter Pond, an Indian Trader from this province, shewing his discoveries, the track pursued, and the stations occupied by him and his party, during an excursion of several years, from which he returned in 1788,

22. Burpee, L. J. *The Search for the Western Sea, The Story of the Exploration of North-Western America by*—London, 1908, 2 vols., p. 587.

23. Public Archives of Canada, M.G. 11, Series Q, Vol. 50-1, pp. 1-2. Lord Dorchester to the Rt. Hon. W. W. Grenville. (Transcript)

after having penetrated as far as the Great Slave Lake.

Mr. Pond proposing some advantage to himself from publishing it hereafter with a detailed account, has requested care may be taken to prevent its getting into other hands, than those of the King's Ministers.

I am told he has quitted this province somewhat dissatisfied with the Trading Company, whom he served, and with a view of seeking employment in the United States, of which he is a native.

Mr. McTavish, one of the principal partners of that Company who has lately sailed from hence for London, will be able to give such information concerning Mr. Pond's Map, and the Country resorted to by their Agents, as may be required.

I am with much respect and esteem | Si^r | Your
most obedient and most humble | Servant

[Signed] Dorchester

The Right Honble | W. W. Grenville

Indorsed: Quebec 23d November 1790 | Lord Dor-
chester | R^d N^y Jan^{y78} 4th 1791 | (Tin Case not yet de-
livered)

The December 6, 1787, map, since recovered, is probably a copy of the map "in a tin case."

No book or account of Pond's such as Dorchester refers to remains but it occurs to me that the reference might have been made to Pond's journal which, to be sure, had not yet then been published but might have been known to some of the authors of these statements. If such were the case Pond's journal, now extant to early in 1775, might have covered a much longer period of time. It hardly seems likely, however, that Pond could have ever thought of putting into print even what remains of the journal, although what we have is interesting enough to make us wish that he had continued it until he left the Northwest in 1788. The part that remains of Pond's Journal was presented to Yale University Library some years ago by Le Grand Cannon who, I believe, is a descendant of one of Pond's brothers. The vilification of Pond continued after he had left Canada. Probably David Thompson was responsible for much of this. One reason I believe this to be so is because Mr. Lamb has sent me a quotation from a book by Dr. J. J.

Bigsby.²⁴ Bigsby states that he is recording a conversation with David Thompson at William McGillivray's house in Montreal, apparently in 1821:

Mr. Thompson gave some curious historic anecdotes, shewing how Dr. Franklin obtained the local information which enabled him to obtain so favourable a boundary line between the Canadas and the United States from Mr. Oswald, the British commissioner.*

Dr. Franklin was indebted for this to Peter Pond, a native of Boston, United States, an observing, enterprising, unprincipled Indian trader in the regions beyond the Great Lakes. This person obtained great influence over his voyageurs by mingling in their carousals, by

*The natural point of departure from Lake Superior for the boundary line is the River St. Louis at its upper end. This would have been advantageous to Great Britain, in securing to her the Upper Missouri, &&

24. J. J. Bigsby, *The Shoe and Canoe*, Vol. 1 (London 1850), pp. 115-18.

his ability and courage. With the quiet foresight of a New Englander, he noted down the topography of the countries he visited, and with the help of Mr. Cuthbert Grant, then a young clerk in the trade, made a tolerable map of them. But such was his violent and rapacious disposition, that he was taken out of the fur countries for at least one murder. The sufferer in the first case was a half-pay German officer named Wadanne, much liked by the Indians, and therefore in Pond's way. He was trading with a small outfit from Government and a permit, as was then the practice.

At a portage called Isle à la Crosse, Pond and a confederate agreed to get rid of him. It was effected thus. They invited Wadanne to sup with them alone in their tent. Over their cups the conspirators engaged in a fierce mock quarrel: both seized their guns. Wadanne tried to mediate, and was *accidentally* shot in the scuffle. His thigh-bone was broken, and he died a few days after. Mrs. Wadanne was close by: but the mischief was done be-

fore she could interfere. I saw her daughter afterwards at Fort La Pluie (J. J. B.).† Pond was brought down and lodged in Montreal gaol, but was acquitted for want of evidence. The Montreal merchants furnished him with an outfit, and he returned to the north-west countries, wintering in Athabasca, near a fort belonging to a Mr. Ross. Peter pursued his usual roystering, plundering career. He persuaded his men to rob Mr. Ross of a load of furs in open day. In the course of the altercation Mr. Ross was shot, really by accident from a gun in the hand of a voyageur named Péch . Pond was blamed, and again brought to Montreal.

While the lawyers were disputing for some months whether the Crown had jurisdiction in the Hudson's Bay territories, Pond broke

†It is to be confessed, that until the Hudson's Bay Company had uncontrolled sway over the Indian countries, rapine, drunkenness, and murder, greatly prevailed therein. Indians and Europeans suffered alike. It is not so now.

out of his wooden gaol, and escaped into the United States. There Franklin picked him up. It is understood that Pond was poorly rewarded. Franklin tried to employ him, but in vain; he was untrustworthy and intractable. Mr. Oswald signed, it is said, the Boundary Treaty without the necessary information. A few hours afterwards some Montreal gentlemen arrived to supply his deficiencies. During his interview with them Mr. Oswald shed tears.

A couple of years after this an Indian trader of Montreal, arriving from England at Boston, accidentally heard of Pond being there. Calling at his lodgings, he found Pond at dinner with two or three other people. As soon as Pond saw him, up he jumped, seized a carving-knife, and swore he would stab the first man that touched him. "Oh!" said the trader, "I do not come to arrest you, but only to have a little fur gossip." "I do not believe you," cried Peter: "the sooner you leave the room the better for you." The gentleman took the hint. Pond also left the town, and was next heard of at Philadelphia.

He died in poverty. His son was lately a blacksmith in Lower Canada.‡

‡After this was copied from my notes I found part in Mackenzie's "History of the Fur Trade," but my information is derived as above, and is much fuller.

As against these opinions of Pond, expressed by some of his contemporaries, so deleterious to his character, we need only refer to the opinions of others as expressed in the letter of Lord Hamilton and the entries in President Stiles' diary cited above. Even Patrick Small's letter speaks well of Pond. The errors in Dr. Bigsby's statement are so manifest it is unnecessary to comment on them.

There will probably never be an agreement of historical writers about Pond and his character. Everyone recognizes his contribution to the geography of the Northwest Territory of Canada but on account of his asserted murders of Jean Etienne Waden and John Ross his character was assailed by many of his contemporaries. It is probable that some action was brought against Pond for these

murders²⁵ but he was acquitted either from lack of evidence or lack of jurisdiction of the courts.²⁶ Indeed, from all accounts it appears that he was not present when Ross was killed and it was not a murder at all but simply a fight in which Ross was unfortunately slain. That there is no truth in the allegation made by some writers that Pond left the country because of these asserted acts of violence is borne out by Patrick Small, who expected him to return from Grand Portage, and Lord Dorchester's letter above quoted. Dorchester probably states Pond's true reason for leaving the country. The intimation of Small about Pond's "incomprehensibly extravagant ideas" seems undoubtedly to refer to Pond's theory that by traveling westward on the Mackenzie or on some such river he could come out on Cook's Inlet. This seems to have been Pond's idea from the start when he first discovered the Mackenzie River which he did not

25. See Note 9 of this article.

26. "A Report of a special committee of the privy council to consider its powers to try cases of murder in the Indian territory and a number of cases so tried included that of Francois Nadeau and Eustache Le Comte for the murder of John Ross at Arambaska." Public Archives of Canada, M.G. 11, Series Q, 36-1, 280-310. There is no mention of Pond.

name. He seemed to believe that there was some water connection with the Pacific at Cook's Inlet. He even impressed Isaac Ogden in 1789 with this idea who wrote it to his father. That this "extravagant idea" had anything to do with Pond's leaving the country seems very unlikely to me but it may be that the partners believed Pond's ideas too extravagant for their policies. That Pond had friends and admirers in Montreal, besides Dorchester and Hamilton, who were most eager to have him as a member of their Company long after he had left the country is shown in the letter in the Birnie letter book (Document VII).

That Pond was a man of tremendous force and energy goes without saying. His ideas about a Northwest Passage or a route across the mountains to the Pacific Ocean were not different from those held by other people at the same time. In fact the idea that the Pacific Ocean was not far removed from New Mexico and what is the Northwest Territory of Canada was a common one after the Spaniards occupied the upper part of California in 1769, but the chief incentive to finding the so-called passage to the Pacific was the immense profits

obtained by the fur traders in Nootka Sound and the Queen Charlotte Islands. Cook's men traded buttons for furs which they sold in Canton for \$100 and this set the world aflame. It is noticeable that Pond on his early maps labeled what is now Nootka Sound "King George's Sound," and it was not until July, 1787, that he produced the map with the name Nootka, proving conclusively that he had just recently read the official account of Cook's voyage published in 1784, as the previous unofficial accounts had not mentioned the name Nootka.

Before leaving our Yankee fur trader I would like to give a few accounts of Pond published by modern writers. Charles Lindsey in his *An Investigation of the Unsettled Boundaries of Ontario*²⁷ ascribes to Pond the designation of a boundary line through the interior countries to the northwest corner of the Lake of the Woods and thence west to the Mississippi, "a line that was accepted by the British commissioners in 1792 or 1793." He refers to Pond in the words of David Thompson as "a violent man of unprincipled character."

27. Toronto 1873.

L. F. R. Masson has several references to Pond, no doubt taken largely from preceding authors or perhaps from the Northwest Company documents, some of which he reproduced.²⁸ He describes Pond as "a man of energetic character and surprising activity and courage . . . impetuous, intractable, proud, extravagant, suspicious, his behavior with his associates was not of a sort to make him esteemed." Masson goes on to say that Pond was "an intrepid trader who had remarkable intelligence and spirit of initiative but lacked sufficient knowledge for the work he had undertaken."

J. N. Wallace in his *Wintering Partners of Peace River*²⁹ unconsciously sums up my theory on the main cause of the hostility of the historians of Pond and his contemporaries—Pond was an American. "Pond bid farewell to the West where for many years he had been among those in the front line of the advance unto unknown regions. Yet Pond's character was so much at variance with the traditions of British exploration that we may well ask if the cause of the western country would not

28. Masson, *op. cit.*, pp. 11, 16, 30.

29. Ottawa 1929, p. 20.

have been better served if he had never gone there, even though the advance had been held back. It could not have been delayed more than a few years, and Pond's subsequent activities in favour of American claims, as against those of the country in which he lived, go far to nullify any claim he may have on us on account of his explorations."

H. A. Innis writes:³⁰

Peter Pond was one of the sons of Martha. His achievements considering the handicaps under which he laboured were in many ways remarkable but they were not of a sensational character. He apparently had little training in astronomy and mathematics and worked with his instruments under great handicaps but he produced a map of very great value—the first map of the Canadian Northwest. It was one of the misfortunes of Peter Pond that the fur trade was productive of bitter enmities and that the chief chronicler of his activities in the Northwest should have taken the opportunity not only to neglect the importance

30. Innis, *op. cit.*, pp. 113–14.

of his work but actually to malign him. The hostility of the small traders to the Northwest Company was never overcome. Alexander Mackenzie was probably never a member of the Northwest Company with the full support and loyalty of its chief share holders. His work³¹ was written after he had broken from them and his account of the fur trade was written from the standpoint of that small band of traders who never surrendered. History has not been kind to Peter Pond. It has taken the word of the chief chronicler of his activities without question.

The intention of the foregoing sketch of Peter Pond's life is not to place him on a pedestal above the traders of his time. He had his faults. He was very proud and very sensitive. One needs only to read the remarks of his journal on Lahontan and on Carver and of the making of a map to present to the Empress of Russia to realize his egoism, but this egoism was partly the result of his age. He had

31. See Note 4 of this article.

achieved great things. It was unfortunate that he was unable to make people realize the extent of his achievements.

John B. Brebner in his *The Explorers of North America 1492-1806*,³² writes:

Pond was a strange figure and a born adventurer. Strong physically, he survived four American campaigns. His Army records showed that as a young man he could win the respect, obedience and friendship of others. As he grew older, a marked egoism and bombast made him very hard to get on with and some of his contemporaries believed that he murdered one, if not two, of his Montreal rivals. He studied the North-West assiduously and skilfully, made highly influential maps and wrote a fascinating, but amazingly illiterate journal. He died poor and perhaps misunderstood in his old age, having esteemed himself something of a philosopher.

Vera Kelsey in her *Red River Runs North*³³ de-

32. New York, 1933, p. 434.

33. New York, 1951, pp. 59-66.

votes a chapter to Peter Pond. While she recognizes and speaks of his illiteracy she also praises him for his enterprising character and apparently attributes most of the disfavor into which he finally fell to his understudy, Alexander Mackenzie. Her book is marred by some rather startling errors but for the earlier explorations it is a valuable work. The writer is a native of Winnipeg and a traveler of distinction. The discovery of Pond's river by Mackenzie running into the Arctic Ocean instead of the Pacific destroyed Pond's prestige, according to Miss Kelsey.

That Pond was a somewhat impractical person was first charged against him in the letter of Small as quoted above. This letter shows that he was impractical—that he was talking about something of which he knew nothing. This was not the reason, however, for his unpopularity among his brother fur traders but apparently that was caused by his quarrelsome character. This estimation of his character seems to be well taken. However, it is to be noted that at the time of Pond's work in the Northwest he was confronted by active opposition and in attempting to defend his rights or what he

thought were his rights he fell out with some of his contemporary opponents. He was probably no more quarrelsome than those opponents and if they happened to get killed in the controversy it might just as well be attributed to self defense as any other motive.

I have already mentioned that Pond's associates were all Scotch and they were almost all from the Orkney Islands and were friends as well as business associates. Pond was regarded by them as a colonial and this may have accounted for some of their feeling against him and may have been one of the reasons for his retiring from the Northwest Company, although his advanced age of almost fifty must also have had something to do with it.

My idea of Pond is that he was a rough individual like his contemporaries and also probably quick tempered and willing to fight if he thought it advisable or necessary. He himself in his journal acknowledged having killed a man in a duel but as life was cheap in the Northwest at that time he might have killed others. From his general character I should judge if he did so he had sufficient provocation.

When Pond embarked in the fur trade he set himself in competition with a number of men just as quarrelsome or I might say ruthless as he is supposed to have been himself.

It seems possible that Pond had been expected to write something about his career and that may have caused his detractors to write in a derogatory manner about him and also to accuse him of taking possession of part of the country. It is possible that his journal extended to his later career. Although I have no knowledge that any of those who criticized Pond ever saw the journal he might have, however, said something about his critics which later inspired their animosity.

If the reader will look at a modern map of Canada and trace Pond's route upon it he must share my admiration for this first white man to go to that great Northwest, some of which still lies untrod by human feet. The initiative, drive, vigor and stamina necessary to set out from a civilized area, journeying over lakes and frozen country, crossing countless marshes and seemingly impassable cliffs such as that at Methye Portage, finally to reach Athabasca and Great Slave Lake—all these at-

tributes Pond possessed and more. His courage and self reliance in that trackless wilderness full of wild animals and savages were remarkable. One of his finest qualities was his interest in the natives and his ability to get along with them. Pond's ability to deal so successfully with the natives was not possessed by many of his Scotch associates and gave rise perhaps to some of their dissatisfaction with him. His success as a peacemaker, as noted in his journal, gives evidence of his fine relation with the Indians, something which he maintained all his life. We marvel not only at the many years Pond spent in arduous journeys, traveling alone across a vast expanse of territory, surviving all the toughest ordeals of the wilds, but that he even established amity with the Indians, one lone white man among a host of redskins. Although Peter Pond is a controversial figure, there is no question that he possessed many of the admirable qualities with which an explorer should be endowed.

Henry R. Wagner

San Marino, August, 1954

THE DOCUMENTS

Document I

Quebec, 6th June, 1785¹

My Lord:—I have the honour to enclose the copy of a memorial to His Excellency, General Haldimand, presented to him by the merchants trading to the Northwest, also their memorial to myself soliciting an exclusive Trade for a limited time. If it may be allowed me to suggest what occurs to me on this business, however, monopolies may be in general prejudicial to commerce; I must think that were the Indian Trade suddenly laid open to greedy and needy adventurers, the returns might be very great for a short period, but the Indians would be drowned in rum, and, exclusive of that consideration, it would be the occasion of endless quarrels, and bloodshed must be the consequence.

The pretension of the first discoverers will have their just weight with your Lordship, I shall therefore decline saying anything upon that head.

The enclosed plan No. 1, shews the communication from Lake Ontario to Lake Huron by Lake

1. Canadian Archives, M.G. 11, Series Q, Vol. 24-2, p. 403 ff. Henry Hamilton to Lord Sidney. (Transcript)

la Clie. No. 2 shews Mr. Pond's discoveries laid down in the best manner a short time would permit.

All which shall be pursued upon the signification of your Lordship's approbation, or abandoned in consequence of the orders I may hope to receive, all which is submitted to the judgement of your Lordship with all possible deference and respect.

I have the honour to be, My Lord,

Your ever obedient and most humble servant,

Henry Hamilton.

Benjamin Frobisher's remarks on the proposed communication accompany this.

The Right Honourable Lord Sidney.

Memorial of the North-West Company²

To His Excellency Frederick Haldimand, Captn. General and Commander in Chief in and over the Province of Quebec and the Territories thereon depending, &c, &c, &c.

The memorial of the North-West Company, Humbly sheweth:

That the Company from the Boundary described in the late treaty of Peace being apprehensive the United States would avail themselves of every means in their power to dispossess them of their Trade to the North West, from being entitled to an equal, if not an exclusive right to the Grand Portage on Lake Superior and the water communication to the extent of Lake du Bois: Have at their own Expence and with the approbation of your Excellency, sent off from the North side of Lake Superior in the month of June last, Two persons on whom they can depend, accompanied by six Canadians, to attempt the discovery of another passage, North of the line of Boundary, to the River Ouini-

2. Canadian Archives, M.G. 11, Series Q, Vol. 24-2, p. 405.

pique, and from the information your Memorialists have since received from them, they have every reason to expect that this passage, so much to be wished for, will be discovered and found practicable; which will effectually secure that valuable branch of the Furr trade to this Province.

That exclusive of this great object, your Memorialists have in view another discovery of greater magnitude, which is that of exploring at their own Expence, between the latitudes of 55 and 65, all that tract of country extending west of the Hudson's Bay to the North Pacific Ocean; of which surveys shall be taken so far as it may be practicable, and such surveys with remarks thereupon respecting the nature of the Country, and the Rivers which discharge their waters into that sea between those latitudes, together with every other information that can be collected from the natives, shall be laid before the King's Governor for this Province, to be by him transmitted to his Majesty.

That the Company's Servants as before mentioned, are now actually employed in the first of these discoveries; And the latter, which must be considered as an object deserving of every En-

couragement from Government, they are ready to undertake by such of their Servants, and other Persons who are qualified to carry their intentions into execution.

That your Memorialists request your Excellency will be pleased to represent to his Majesty's Ministers the value and importance of these discoveries; and the propriety of granting to the Company an exclusive right to the passage they may discover from the North side of Lake Superior to the River Ouinipique; and also of the Trade to the North-West either by that passage or by the present communication of the Grand Portage for Ten Years only, as a reward for their services and in consideration of their making these extensive and valuable discoveries, at their own expence.

Your Memorialists would not presume to ask for this exclusive Right of Trade to the North-West, if it could prove injurious to individuals, or hurtful to this Province in general; but on the contrary, they are the only persons who have any Interest or connection in that Country; consequently no one can be injured by it; while it will give them the opportunity of making the discoveries they pro-

pose, and pursuing the most proper measures suggested by long experience to supply the natives abundantly with every necessary they require, by which only, and a well regulated system in that long chain of connections, the North-West Business is capable of being extended.

Your Memorialists therefore request, that until his Majesty's pleasure is known, that your Excellency will be pleased to suspend the granting of passes for the Grand Portage, or the passage they are attempting to discover from the North side of Lake Superior to the River Ouinipique, should they be applied for; and that you will be pleased to signify the same to the Officer commanding at Michilimakinak, to the end that no person may have cause to complain under a pretence of having property in the Country, if the Company should obtain for the Considerations now laid before your Excellency an exclusive right to the Trade from Lake Superior to the NorthWest.

Your Memorialists pray your Excellency will take the merit of their Memorial into your consideration, and that you will be pleased to recommend to his Majesty's Ministers to grant to the North-

West Company (of which your Memorialists are the Directors) an exclusive privilege of Trade from Lake Superior to that Country for Ten Years only, as a reward for discovering a new passage to the River Ouinipique, and thereby effectually securing to this Province the Furr Trade to the North-West. And in consideration also, of exploring at their own expense between the latitudes of 55 and 65, all that Tract of Country West of Hudson's Bay to the North Pacific Ocean, and communicating to Government such Surveys and other information respecting that Country as it may be in their power to obtain.

And your Memorialists as in duty bound will ever pray &c. Montreal, 4th October, 1784. Benj. & Jos. Frobisher Directors of the North-West Company.

*Benjamin and Joseph Frobisher
to General Haldimand*

Montreal, 4th October, 1784³

Sir.—We beg to lay before your Excellency for your Consideration the enclosed Memorial on the subject of the trade to the North-West, to which we request your Excellency will permit us to add a few remarks respecting the rise and progress of that Business at different periods, since the Conquest of this Country, and state to your Excellency the nature and extent of it, and the advantages which will Arise, not only to the Proprietors, but to this Province in general, from a well regulated System in conducting it.

The first adventurer went from Michilimakinak in the year 1765. The Indians of Lake Pluye having then been long destitute of Goods, stop't and plundered his Canoes, and would not suffer him to proceed further. He attempted it again the year following, and met with the same bad Fortune. Another attempt was made in the year 1767; they left Goods at Lake Pluye to be traded with the Natives,

3. Canadian Archives, M.G. 11, Series Q, Vol. 24-2, p. 409. *Report*, pp. 48-52.

who permitted them to proceed with the remainder; and the Canoes penetrated beyond Lake Ouinipique.

From this period the Trade of that Country was attempted by other Adventurers with various success, and we were among the number in the year 1769, when we formed a connection with Messrs. Todd & McGill of Montreal, for the purpose of carrying on the Business, but the Indians of Lake La pluye, still ungovernable and rapacious, plundered our Canoes, and would not suffer any part of our Goods to be sent further. Before we could be acquainted with this misfortune, our Goods for the year following were at the Grand Portage, and we were then too far engaged to hesitate for a moment. A second attempt was made in which we were more successful. Our Canoes reached Lake Bourbon, and thence forward we were determined to persevere. Taught however by experience that separate Interests were the Bane of Trade we lost no time to form with those Gentlemen, and some others, a Company and having men of Conduct and Abilities to conduct it in the Interior Country, the Indians were soon abundantly supplied and being at the same time well treated, New Posts were dis-

covered early as the year 1774, which to the French were totally unknown: And had we not been interrupted by new adventurers, the public in the course of a few years would have been well acquainted with the value and extent of that Country, of which even at this time, our knowledge is very imperfect. These Adventurers consulting their own Interest only, without the least regard to the management of the Natives, and the general welfare of the Trade; soon occasioned such disorder, that those who had the most substantial prospects, lost no time to withdraw their property, since which this Business tho' not altogether neglected, has been carried on under great disadvantages occasioned by a great variety of Interests, sometimes partially, and at other times totally unconnected with each other; insomuch that at the latter end of the year 1782, those who had persevered were no more than Twelve in number, and being convinced by long experience, of the advantages that would arise from a general connection, not only calculated to secure and promote their mutual Interests, but also to guard against any encroachments of the United States on the line of Boundary,

as ceded to them by treaty from Lake Superior to Lake du Bois—They entered upon and concluded Articles of Agreement, under title of the North-West Company of which we were named the Directors, dividing it into sixteen shares; of which each proprietor holds a certain number proportionate to the Interest he then had in the Country. And to prove to the world, that they have no Views but what are directed to extend that Business, and promote the Commercial Interest of the Province, it is expressly ordered in the Thirty-second Article that their Agreement for the purpose of carrying on a Trade to the North-West, shall be registered at the Secretaries Office for this Province at Quebec; for the Inspection of the public.

Their first object was to prepare the necessary supplies and provide against any interruption to their business from the United States, by discovering another passage from Lake Superior to the river Quinipique, at least 40 Leagues distant from the American line, at the Lake of the Woods, to secure at all events a communication with the North-West. Having every reason to expect from the line to be drawn as explained in the late treaty

of Peace, that they would soon be dispossessed of the Grand Portage, situated at the North-West extremity of Lake Superior, which is the only part of that Country where there is a possibility of getting to the Water Communication which leads to Lake du Bois, and thenceforward to every part of the Country beyond it; from which your Excellency will perceive the Grand Portage is the key to that part of British America; and should the United States be put in possession before another passage is discovered, that valuable Branch of the Furr Trade must be forever lost to this Province. Urged by these reasons the Company lost no time in procuring the best information of the Country; and early in June last, they actually sent off from the North side of Lake Superior a Canoe with Provisions only, navigated by six Canadians under the direction of Mr. Edward Umfreville, who has been Eleven Years in the Service of the Hudson's Bay Company and Mr. Venance St. Germain; both of them men who speak the Language of the Natives and who are in other respects very well qualified to execute the Company's intentions.

Their Instructions were to proceed to Lake

Alempigon and thence in a West direction by the best Road for the Transportation of Goods in Canoes to the River Ouinipique at, or as near as may be to the Portage de L'Isle, and by Letters received from them at Lake Alempigon 30th June, it appears they had met with innumerable difficulties from the want of Indian Guides, but they had then one who had undertaken to conduct them to Lake Eturgeon and they express'd the most sanguine hopes of getting forward from thence to the River Ouinipique. The Company have no accounts of them since that period, and as all their Canoes are now returned from the Grand Portage, they cannot until the next year give your Excellency any further information concerning this discovery.

The Inland Navigation from Montreal, by which the North-West business is carried on, is perhaps the most extensive of any in the known World, but is only practicable for Canoes on account of the great number of Carrying places. To give your Excellency some Idea of which, there are upwards of ninety from Montreal to Lake du Bois only, and many of them very long ones.

Two sets of men are employed in this business, making together upwards of 500; one half of which are occupied in the transport of Goods from Montreal to the Grand Portage, in canoes of about Four Tons Burthen, Navigated by 8 to 10 men, and the other half are employed to take such goods forward to every Post in the interior Country to the extent of 1,000 to 2,000 miles and upwards, from Lake Superior, in Canoes of about one and a-half Ton Burthen, made expressly for the inland service, and navigated by 4 to 5 men only, according to the places of their destination.

The large Canoes from Montreal always set off early in May, and as the Provisions they take with them are consumed by the time they reach Michil-makinac, they are necessitated to call there, merely to take in an additional Supply, not only for themselves but also for the use of the Canoes intended for the Interior Country and the Consumption of their servants at the Grand Portage, but as these Canoes are not capable of carrying the whole of such Provisions it thence becomes necessary to have a Vessel or Boats upon Lake Superior for that Transport only, and the utmost dispatch is re-

quired that everything may be ready in point of time to send off their supplies for the Interior Country, for which purpose the Goods, Provisions and everything else required for the Outfits of the year, must be at the Grand Portage early in July; for the carrying place being at least Ten Miles in Length, Fifteen days are commonly spent in this Service, which is performed by the Canoemen, who usually leave the west end from the 15th July to the 1st August, according to the distance of the places they are intended for.

Their general loading is two-thirds Goods and one-third Provisions, which not being sufficient for their subsistence until they reach winter Quarters, they must and always do depend on the Natives, they occasionally meet on the Road for an Additional supply; and when this fails which is sometimes the case they are exposed to every misery that it is possible to survive, and equally so in returning from the Interior Country, as in the Spring provisions are generally more Scanty. In Winter Quarters, however, they are at ease, and commonly in plenty, which only can reconcile them to that manner of life, and make them forget their Suffer-

ings in their Annual Voyage to and from the Grand Portage.

We have taken the liberty to mention these matters so minutely to your Excellency to demonstrate how precarious that business is, and to show the impossibility of carrying it on to any extent in opposite Interests, without manifest ruin to some of the parties concerned and the destruction of the Trade. While on the contrary, by a well regulated system in that long and precarious chain of connections which a Company alone can establish and execute, every Advantage may be derived for discovery and improvement.

The present Company have accordingly adopted the most proper measures to answer those ends, and have entered upon the Business with a determined Spirit to supply the Natives plentifully with every necessary they require which is the only sure means to extend it and to obtain a perfect knowledge of the Country, so far as it may be done without interfering with the Commercial rights of the Hudson's Bay Company, which on all occasions they will carefully avoid.

The property the Company have already in that

Country, exclusive of their Houses and Stores, and the different Posts, as appears by the settlement of their Accounts this present year Amounts to the sum of 25,303.3.6. pounds Currency; and their Outfits for the next Spring which will be sent from Montreal as soon as Navigation is open, will not fall much short of that sum so that the Company will have an Interest at the Grand Portage in July next of about 50,000 pounds, original Cost in Furrs, to be sent to Montreal by the return of their Canoes, and in goods for the Interior Country, from which your Excellency may judge of what may be expected from that Trade, when in our power by an exclusive Right for Ten Years to explore the Country and extend it.

We beg your Excellency's pardon for troubling you with this long detail, we have done it merely to give your Excellency the best information respecting a Trade which, is hardly known, and still less understood, except by those who have been in that Country, requesting your Excellency will take this letter in support of their Memorial, into your consideration, and extend to the Company your Favour and protection to obtain for them An Ex-

clusive Right to the Trade of the North-West, on the Conditions stated in the Prayer of their Said Memorial to your Excellency.

We have the Honour to be with the utmost respect in behalf of the North-West Company.

Your Excellency's

Most obedt. and Most Hbl. Servts.

Benjn. & Jos. Frobisher

To His Excellency

General Haldimand

Quebec.

Document II

Quebec April the 9th 1785⁴

My Lord:

Mr. Pond is an American by birth, he has long indulged a passion for making discoveries, he has pursued them indefatigably being qualified by an excellent constitution to endure the fatigues, and by an active mind to encounter the many difficulties that naturally occur in the prosecution of such pursuits.

This gentleman has communicated to me the map on which his route is traced, he has also without difficulty interested me with the remarks he has made; his confidence cannot be better repayed than by commending him to your Lordship, which I venture to do upon the following grounds, which I hope may have your Lordship's approbation.

Mr. Pond's discoveries may prove of infinite utility to this country, consequently of great importance to the parent state. The prosecution of them may lead to establishments, at this period

4. London, Public Record Office, C.O. 42, 47, pp. 667-68.

(considering the active and encroaching spirit of our neighbors) particularly necessary. The pre-occupying certain advantageous stations may be highly expedient.

Encouragement may attach him to British interest, a want of it may drive him to court employment elsewhere. The following particulars I have from Mr. Pond, which perhaps your Lordship may think worth attention.

Two young men, Americans, educated at New Haven College (one of them named Woodruffe) were on board Captain Cook's ship when he prosecuted his discoveries on the Western Coast of North America. They had been sent with the view of advantage from their remarks. They have lately been at New York, and are actually gone to Boston to attend to the prosecution of an undertaking on foot for building two vessels assigned for the carrying on of discoveries in those regions.

Mr. Pond assures me that seven thousand Pounds are subscribed by but a small number of people in his country to support the expense of further discoveries.

I have collected from him some remarks on the

country he has explored, which when I have time to digest, shall be transmitted for your Lordship's perusal.

The Map which I shall send at the same time is I think very curious, and when compared with his narrative, and the Memorials of the Merchants concerned in the Northwest trade, may possibly attract your Lordship's attention.

I have the honor to be with the most profound respect My Lord your most humble and most obedient servant

[signed] Henry Hamilton

Document III

*To the Honorable Henry Hamilton Esq. Lieutenant Governor and Commander in Chief in and over the Province of Quebec and Frontiers thereof in America etc. etc. The Memorial of Peter Pond on behalf of the North West Company in which he is a Partner.*⁵

Humbly Sheweth

That Benjamin & Joseph Frobisher Directors of the North West Company, presented a Memorial to his Excellency General Haldimand in the month of October last, proposing in the name of all the persons concerned, to undertake certain discoveries; and praying for such priviledges & protection from Government, as would enable them to carry their proposals into execution, and indemnify them for the toil & expence of such an arduous & extensive undertaking:—as will more fully appear by a Copy of the said Memorial, which I am directed by the Company to lay before your Honor; together with a letter which accompanied it.

5. London, Public Record Office, C.O. 42, 47, pp. 649–51.

His Excellency General Haldimand was pleased to receive the Memorial with great attention, and gave the strongest assurances that he would represent the importance of the plan therein proposed to his Majesty's Ministers; and give it every support in his power in order that it might take place.

Your Memorialist begs leave to assure your Honor that the persons connected in the North West Company are able and willing to accomplish the important discoveries proposed in their Memorial to His Excellency General Haldimand; provided they meet with due encouragement from Government; having men among them who have already given proof of their genius and unwearied industry, in exploring those unknown regions as far as the Longitude of 128 degrees West of London; as will appear by a map, with remarks⁶ upon the Country therein laid down which your Memorialist had lately the honor of laying before you [undecipherable words] information of Government; and the Company will procure at its own expense, such

6. This would indicate that Pond had prepared a description of this map similar to the remarks in the British Museum which accompany the copy of his map which was presented to Congress.

assistants as may be found necessary, to pursue this work already begun; until the whole extent of that unknown country between the latitudes of Fifty Four & Sixty seven to the north Pacific Ocean is thoroughly explored; and during the progress of this enterprise, the Company will engage to transmit from time to time to His Majesty and Governor of this province, for the information of Government correct Maps of those Countries, and exact accounts of their nature and production, with remarks upon everything useful or Curious, that may be met with in the prosecution of this plan.

Your Memorialist humbly begs leave to inform your Honor, that he has had possitive information from the Natives, who have been on the Coast of the North Pacific Ocean, that there is a trading post already established by the Russians; and your memorialist is credibly informed that Ships are now fitting out from United States of America, under the Command of Experienced Seamen (who accompanied Captain Cook in his last Voyage) in order to establish a Fur trade upon the North-west coast of North America, at or near Prince William's Sound and if the late treaty of Peace is adhered to

respecting the Cession of the Upper post, the United States will also have an easy access into the North West by way of the Grand Portage. From these circumstances your Memorialist is humbly of opinion, that this branch of trade will very soon fall a prey to the enterprizes of other Nations, to the great prejudice of His Majesty's subjects, unless some means are speedily used to prevent it. It therefore becomes necessary for Government to protect and encourage the Northwest Company in the earliest prosecution of the proposed plan; in order that trading posts may be settled; & connections formed with the Natives, all over that Country even to the Sea Coast; by which means so firm a footing may be established as will preserve that valuable trade from falling into the hands of other powers: and under proper management, it may Certainly in a Short time be so extended as to become an object of great importance to the British Nation, highly advantageous to this mutilated Province.

Your Memorialist therefore humbly prays that your Honor will be pleased to recommend the Memorial of the North West Company to His

Majesty's Ministers, in the strongest manner as a plan which will be productive of Great National Advantages; and that you will give it all the support in Your power, in order to obtain for the Company an exclusive right to the trade to the North West of Lake Superior for the space of Ten Years only as a reward for the toil & expence of such an arduous and public Spirited Enterprise and in the meantime, Your Memorialist humbly requests that Your Honor will be pleased to suspend the Granting of Passes to the Grand Portage to any person or Persons not concerned in the North West Company, if any such should be applying for; and that Your honor will signify your pleasure in this respect to the Commanding officer at Michilimackinac to the end that no opposition may be formed against the Company by new Adventurers, until his Majesty's pleasure is known.

And your Memorialist as in duty bound
will Ever Pray Etc. Etc.

(Signed) Peter Pond

on behalf of Ye N.W.Co.

Quebec 18th April 1785.

Document IV

*David Ogden to Evan Nepean*⁷

Sir,—Having received from my son Isaac Ogden of Quebec a letter dated 7th Novem. 1789 giving an account of a Mr. Pond's having explored the interior parts of North America, I have the honor to inclose you an extract of said Letter as the same may afford some advantageous Information to Government, which, if you think proper you will lay before Mr. Grenville.

I have the Honor to be Sir,

Your most obedt. & very humble serv.

David Ogden.

Rathborne Place, No. 50

January 23d, '90.

7. Canadian Archives, M.G. 11, Series Q, Vol. 49, p. 356.

*Isaac Ogden, Quebec to David Ogden, London; An extract of a Letter from Isaac Ogden, Esq. at Quebec, to David Ogden, Esq., of London, dated Quebec, 7th November, 1789.*⁸

In my last letter I gave you some account of the extent of the Commerce, and of this Country, and as I am convinced that common Report of Estimation of Distance, &c., will not be satisfactory to a Philosophic mind, and as since I have had an opportunity of seeing a map or chart of that Country made by a Gentleman of observation and Science, who has actually traversed it, and made his map in it, and with whom I have this week had several Conversations, with the map before me, I am able to give you all the satisfaction you wish for, exclusive of the map itself, which I could not get a

8. Canadian Archives, M.G. 11, Series Q, Vol. 49, p. 357. An almost identical copy of this document is to be found in the collection of the papers of Sir Joseph Banks in the Sutro Branch of the California State Library. Accompanying the letter is an interesting memorandum about Pond in Sir Joseph's handwriting, together with another letter about Pond dated 4 November 1789, by J. Mervin Nooth. These have all been published by Richard H. Dillon in the *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* (1951), Vol. 42, pp. 324-29.

copy of, but I hope to send it to you the next summer.

The following are observations that I took from the map.

It begins at the upper end of Lake Superior, in Lat. 46-47 North, where there is a Portage of near 9 miles before you enter the water communicating to the North West.

The Mississippi heads in the same Lat. with the head of Lake Superior, about 10 Degrees of Longitude to the westward of it, and from the Portage there is a water Communication to that River, and down it, which is only interrupted by the Falls of St. Anthony. The traders go on this Course Westward, leaving the Mississippi to the Eastward one thousand miles; and may go south west down the Mississippi to its mouth.

The furs much inferior to those on the North West trading Posts.

From the end of the Portage at the Head of Lake Superior, all the lakes and waters as high up as Lat. 58 and Long. 124 set first to the North-West and North, and then take a South Easterly and South course, and empty into York River, (Hud-

son's Bay.) These Lakes and Rivers are almost innumerable.

Some of them are very large such as the Lake Winnipeg, Lake of the Woods and others. The Mouth of York River lays in Long. 94 West and Lat. 57. It is an extensive large River setting nearly West, and is supplied by the above Lakes and Rivers which fall into it from the North and South.

The Hudson's Bay Company have Posts several hundred miles west from them, but none to the Northward;—Our Traders pass them at one of their posts about the Lat. 57 and Long. 110. A Chain of Lakes, &c., continue from thence to the Lat. 58 & Long. 124 when with a small Portage they enter into the Rivers and Lakes that run a North West course and empty into other Lakes and Rivers, which all finally communicate and empty into a great Lake called the Slave Lake, which lays between the Lat. of 63 & 65 being three degrees in width, & Long. from 125 to 135, and this Lake is the last water before you come to the Great Northern Ocean, which lays in Lat. $68\frac{1}{2}$ and in the Long. 132 where the water ebbs & flows of which the Gentleman gave me indubitable Proofs.

The Lakes that empty into the Great Slave Lake, at least the largest of them, are named the Arabaska (which has a large River running into Slave Lake of three or four hundred miles at least in Length, its course North West) the Lake, or rather the *upper* Lake of the Woods, or Lake of the Hills (there being one near Lake Superior) and this Lake extends itself near 8 degrees of Long. and lays in Lat. 60 and the Lake Pelican which is also large, and besides these there are a number of small Lakes.

The River that carries all these Waters into the Slave Lake is called Slave River and is very large, it runs North West several hundred miles in Length.

From out of the Great Slave Lake runs a very large River, which runs almost South West, and has the largest Falls on it in the known World, it is at least two miles wide where the Falls are, and an amazing Body of Water. This River leaves the Lake in Lat. 64 & Long. 135, & the Falls are in Long. 141.

The great chain of Mountains, that extend from Mexico along the Western or Pacific Ocean, and

the Northern Pacific Ocean, terminates in Lat. $62\frac{1}{2}$ & Longitude 136, so that the Slave River runs to the Westward of them and emptys into the Ocean by its course in about the Lat. of 59.

There is no wood to the Northward of Slave Lake, there is only a little low Brush which is filled with a species of Buffaloes which have no Tails, but have long Hair on the Back of their Thighs and Legs that resemble a Tail. They are smaller than the common Buffaloes.

When you have proceeded thus far, & have looked over your map, you will readily conjecture what River the above Slave Lake River is known by, when it empties into the Ocean. To save you much Trouble I will tell you it is Cook's River, which he penetrated upwards of 70 Leagues North Eastwd., as you will see by his chart. Cook's River as he has laid it down in his chart (that is the Mouth of it) lays in Lat. 59-40 & Long. West. 154.

His calculation and laying it down was East Longitude, but if you deduct his Eastern Long. from 360 you will find it to be 154 West. His course up the River was North Easterly, the course of the River out of Slave Lake was South Westerly.

He traversed his River that course near 70 Leagues North Easterly, the River out of Slave Lake is known as far South Westerly, therefore the distance to form the Junction or to ascertain the River to be the same is very short. The mouth of Cook's River is in Lat. 59-40 & Long. 154. The course is North Easterly and South Westerly. The Degrees of Long. in that Lat. are but little more than 26 miles upon the Average to a Degree and the Difference of the Lat. only about 4 degrees. Hence, and as there is no other known Vent for the River setting out of Slave Lake, nor any other River in that Country to the Northward or Southward of Slave Lake to form such a River as Cook's River, there can be no doubt but the source of Cook's River is now fully discovered and known. There are other Proofs that are incontestable—Cook found a great quantity of drift wood on the Coast. This wood is only found on the Banks of the Rivers of any size from the near Approach of the Mountains to the Sea to the Eastward [southward] of the Lake. The Rivers of Arabaska, Slave and Mountain, which empty into Slave Lake are annually twice overflowed in the month of May by the breaking

up of the Ice, and in the month of August by the melting of the Snow on the Mountains. Hence, then, is accounted for the quantity of drift wood which Capt. Cook met with, and these could only be launched into the Ocean from Cook's River—for as I have already observed there can be no extensive River to the Southward of Cook's River, or the River that empties out of Slave Lake, as the great Chain of Mountains approach to the verge of Slave Lake & River.

Another Proof is, that the Gentleman (from whose Chart and from whom I collected the above Information) met with two Indians who came, as they said up a River from the Northern Pacific Ocean, all the way to the Slave Lake.

They brought him in 1787 a Blanket which they received from Vessels which were at the Mouth of the River; they say that the River he was in is large to the place of Discharge and Navigable, so that if we take the Latitude and Longitude of the two Rivers, the Courses, and all the other circumstances into consideration, little doubt remains that they are the same.

In the Northern part of the Slave Lake there

was a great quantity of Ice on the 15th July, 1787, and in that year the Indians from that Lake penetrated North, and where the waters ebb and flow.

At the Northern Ocean they met with and killed a number of Esquimaux Indians, which Indians are to be found only on the Banks or Boundary of the Ocean from the Labrador Coast Northward, and they are found on the whole Extent of that Coast as far North as we have any knowledge. Cook went as far North as 72 or 73 and was there obstructed by the Ice. He was there in August, my Informant tells me, that if he had been a month later, he would have met with no obstruction from Ice in that Quarter. This I believe and at the middle of September he might have passed the Northern Coast of America, and have returned to Europe by that Rout. On the North Western Coast of America there is a large or long Point of Land that extends to the Lat. of 71 or further, and then the Coast trends South Easterly so that when you are in Long. 128 the Ocean washes the Land in the Lat. of $68\frac{1}{2}$.

The Inferences that I shall now draw are,

1st. That Lake Superior lays in the first Range of High Lands between this and the Western Ocean, in Lat. 46, 47, & the waters from thence are discharged by the River St. Lawrence and Mississippi.

2nd. That the waters to the Westward and Northward of the Lake up as high as Lat. 58 & Long. 124 discharge themselves by an Eastern course into York River, which empties into Hudson's Bay.

3rd. That in Lat. 58 lays the great Height of Land from whence the waters divide and run Easterly and Westerly. The former into the Atlantic and the latter into the Pacific Ocean.

4th. That the great Slave Lake is the most Northernly large piece of water before you arrive at the Northern Ocean, and that the River which rises from that Lake empties into the Northern Pacific Ocean, and is the River that Cook discovered.

5th. That an easy communication with, and an advantageous commerce may be carried on by Posts established on Lakes Slave, Arabaska, Pelican, &c. &c. and to deliver the Fruits of their commerce at the Mouth of Cook's River, to be then carried to

China &c. and that as Cook's River and the Lands on Slave Lake, Arabaska &c. are very fine, some advantageous, settlements may be made there which may be beneficial to Government.

The Country about Arabaska is exceedingly fine, and the Climate more moderate than it is here, which is owing to its Propinquity to the Western Ocean. The distance is not more than 200 Leagues, if so much, on a West South Western Course. We have a Post there, as we have on the different Lakes from Lake Superior to the upper end of Slave Lake, the number of Posts is 21, in that distance where Traders are posted to trade with the different tribes of Indians.

The distance from this Town to the head of Lake Superior is 750 Leagues and from the head of Lake Superior to the Great Slave Lake is one thousand Leagues in the whole 1750 Leagues.

The person from whom I had my Information is Peter Pond, who was supplied with the proper Instruments here to take his Latitude and instructed fully in the knowledge of Astronomy &c. &c. His Latitude is undoubtedly Right and his Longitude

is near Right. It was taken by some Persons sent from York River seven hundred miles to the westward of it, and from thence by the Courses of the Rivers and Lakes, no great mistake can be made.

Perhaps another use might be made in time of War by this Rout, which would be to convey Intelligence to the East Indies by that Rout.

Another man by the name of McKenzie was left by Pond at Slave Lake with orders to go down the River, and from thence to Unalaska, and so to Kamskatsha, and then to England through Russia &c. If he meets with no accident you may have him with you next year.

Document V

Chronology of Peter Pond as noted by President Ezra Stiles on the back of his map.

Capt. Peter Pond's Residences

- | | | |
|------|---|--|
| 1773 | } | Wintered at St. Peters R. in the Sources of |
| 1774 | | Mississippi 3 leagues below the falls of St. Antoine |
| 1775 | } | Two years at Ft. Dauphin on S. W. side |
| | | L. Winnepeke No. 8 |
| 1776 | } | |
| 1777 | | at Ft. Prairie No. 12 |
| 1778 | } | at Arabauska and came to Montreal 1779 |
| 1779 | } | Montreal 1781 Ft. La Ronge No. 1A |
| 1780 | | 1782 or 1783 at Michilimakinak & Montreal |
| 1785 | } | at Arabauska 3 years to No. 21 in summer |
| | | excursions & came out in 1788 |
| 1786 | | and came out of the Ind. country 1788. At |
| 1787 | } | Montreal & Quebec in 1789 and 1788. Re- |
| | | turned to Milford March 1790. |

Document VI

*Instructions to Captain Peter Pond and William Steedman, January 9, 1792.*⁹

Gentlemen:

Having verbally acquainted you with the general causes of the existing hostilities between the United States and certain Western tribes of Indians, it will not be necessary to recapitulate, particularly, the same to you in writing.

This war is irksome to the President and General Government, as well as to the people, generally, of the United States. It has, however, been brought on by events which the government could not control.

We wish to be at peace with those Indians—to be their friends and protectors—to perpetuate them on the land.

The desire, therefore, that we have for peace, must not be inconsistent with the national reputa-

9. *American State Papers*, Class II, Indian Affairs, Vol. I, p. 227.

tion. We cannot ask the Indians to make peace with us, considering them as the aggressors: but they must ask a peace of us. To persuade them to this effect is the object of your mission.

Repair to Niagara and Detroit, without suffering your business to escape you, until the proper time. When at Detroit, assume the characters of traders with the Indians—a business Mr. Pond is well acquainted with. Mix with the Miami and Wabash Indians. Find their views and intentions, through such channels as your discretion shall direct. Learn the opinions of the more distant Indians. Insinuate upon all favorable occasions, the humane disposition of the United States; and, if you can by any means ripen their judgement, so as to break forth openly, and declare the readiness of the United States to receive, with open arms, the Indians, notwithstanding all that is past, do it. If such declaration should be made, at the Miami or Wabash, and be well received, you might persuade some of the most influential chiefs to repair to our posts on the Ohio, and so, from post to post, to this place.

But, if you should be so fortunate as to succeed in persuading the chiefs of the Miami and hostile,

and any other neighboring tribes, to repair here, every possible precaution must be taken by you, and by the commanding officer of the troops, who is hereby required to afford the necessary escorts, in order to guard the Indians from being injured by the whites.

While among the Indians, or at Niagara, or Detroit, endeavor to find out the numbers and tribes of the Indians who were in the attack of General St. Clair, and their loss killed and wounded; what number of prisoners they took; and what they did with them; what disposition they made of the cannon taken, arms, tents, and other plunder; what are their intentions for the next year; the numbers of the association; how they are supplied with arms, ammunition, and provisions.

You will readily perceive, that the information required must be given me at the earliest period possible. You will, therefore, let me know, by some means which you must devise, your arrival at Niagara, Detroit, and the Miami village; and, if possible, from thence, what are your prospects.

You have herewith delivered you eight hundred dollars—for this sum you will be held accountable,

and for which you must produce vouchers. It is intended to defray your expenses, and to facilitate the great object of your mission. Your reputation will stand pledged that it be applied only on proper occasions.

Besides your reasonable expenses while employed in this mission, you shall be paid, on your return, a liberal compensation for your services, by the United States. It is unnecessary, at this time, to say what the sum shall be: but you may be assured, in any event, it shall be in proportion to the hazard and fatigue of the business; and, if successful, also in proportion to the services you may render.

You are hereby informed, that I have employed the Reverend Mr. Kirkland to persuade some of the chiefs of the Six Nations to repair to this place. You will probably see him at Genesee. But, although you may obtain as much information from him as possible, yet you must not discover the object of your mission to him, or any other mortal, until the proper time of its execution: if you do, you will ruin the plan, and, perhaps, lose your lives too.

I have been informed, that, at the decrease of this moon, there is to be a great council of the Senecas assembled at Buffalo creek, near Fort Erie. It is important I should know the object of this council; endeavor, therefore, to find it out, and let me know, by an express: provided, however, that Mr. Kirkland should not be able to inform you. I have written to him upon this subject, which I deliver to you.

Your route will be from hence to Wyoming; thence to the Painted Post, and to Genesee, where you will obtain runners to go with you to Niagara. Given, &c.

H. Knox, Secretary of War.

Document VII

The Birnie Letter Book

Montreal 7th Jan. 1792¹⁰

Mr. John Howard

Dr. Bache

In Consequence of our Montreal agreement I wrote a letter to Mr. Pond, the 13th Nov. last by McNeil, simply intimating that we had formed a Company for the N.W. and offered to him to join without pointing out to him any Share that he would hold, if he choses to join us I reffered him to you at N.Y. in March next & in Case he meets you there I agree to any terms you may agree upon with him.

I write by this opp^y to Mr. Bache to purchase 20,000 wampum agreeable to the Memd^m you left as well as 200, pipes & 2 Doz [undecipherable]. I am happy to inform you that all your family are well & believe me Dr. Bache Yrs. Most sincerely

[signed] J. B.

10. Public Archives of Canada, Samuel Birnie Letter Book. These letters relate to a projected opposition to the North-west Company by John Howard, Jacob Jordan and Samuel Birnie (to be supported by Jordan's backers Brickwood Pattie & Co. of London), in which Pond was offered a share.

*Five hundred copies, of which fifty are on Rives paper,
printed at the Printing-Office of the
Yale University Press.*



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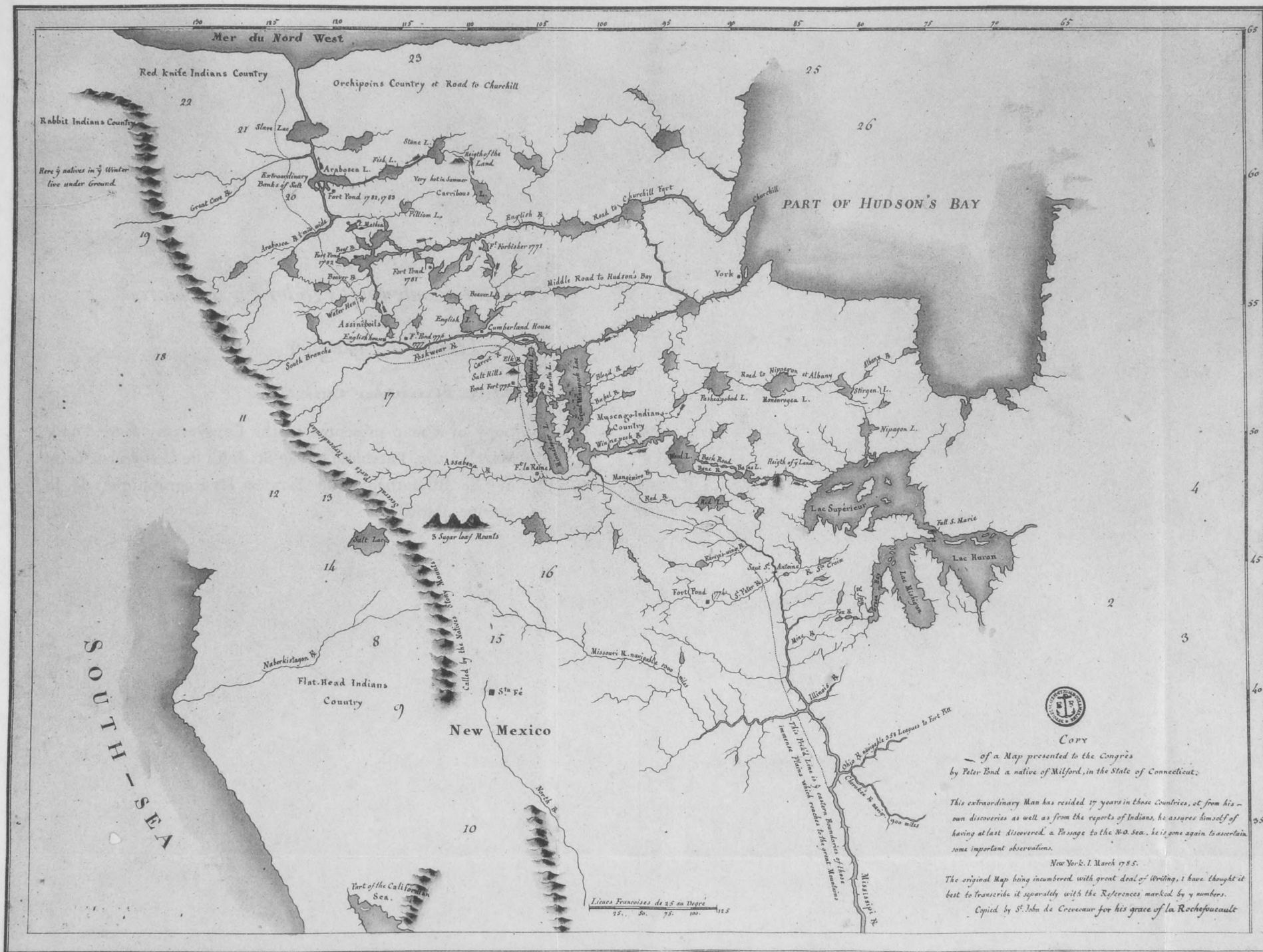
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Peter Pond, Fur Trader & Explorer

by Henry R. Wagner

Map Number One

Copy of a map presented to the Congress by Peter Pond, March 1785. Facsimile of the St. John de Crèvecoeur copy in the Bibliothèque du Service Hydrographique de la Marine, Paris.

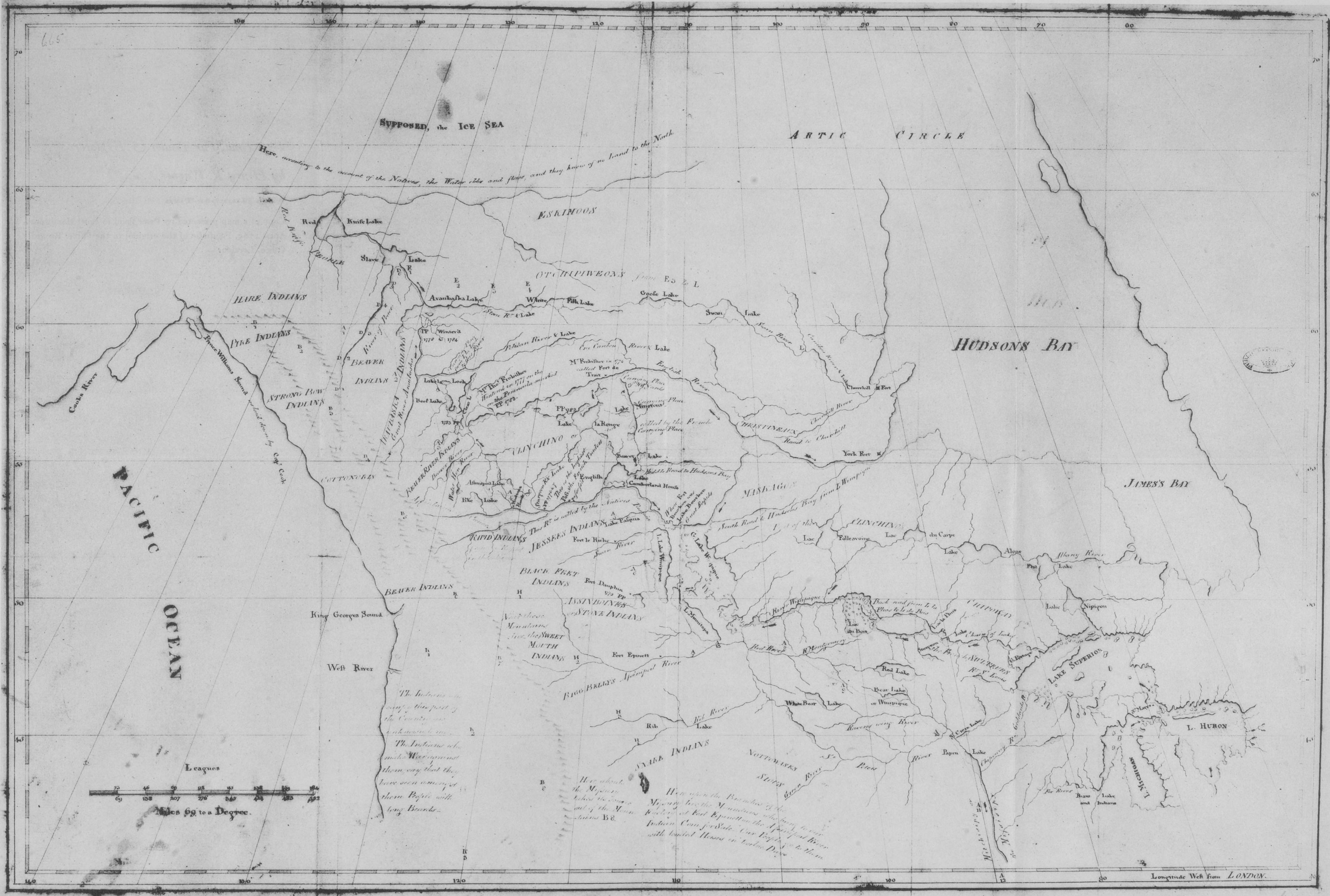


Peter Pond, Fur Trader & Explorer

by Henry R. Wagner

Map Number Two

Copy of a map presented by Peter Pond to Lord Hamilton,
April 1785. Facsimile of the original in the Public Record
Office, London.



SUPPOSED, the ICE SEA

ARTIC CIRCLE

HUDSONS BAY

JAMES'S BAY

PACIFIC OCEAN

Leagues
Miles 69 to a Degree.

The Indians who
inhabit this part of
the Country are
unknown to me.
The Indians who
inhabit the West
River say that they
have seen amongst
them People with
long Beards.

Here about
the Niagara
River the Indians
asked the Source
of the Mountain
B.C.

Here when the Mountains of the
Niagara are the Mountains who have been
found at Fort Epoufette the Indians
asked the Source of the Mountain
B.C.

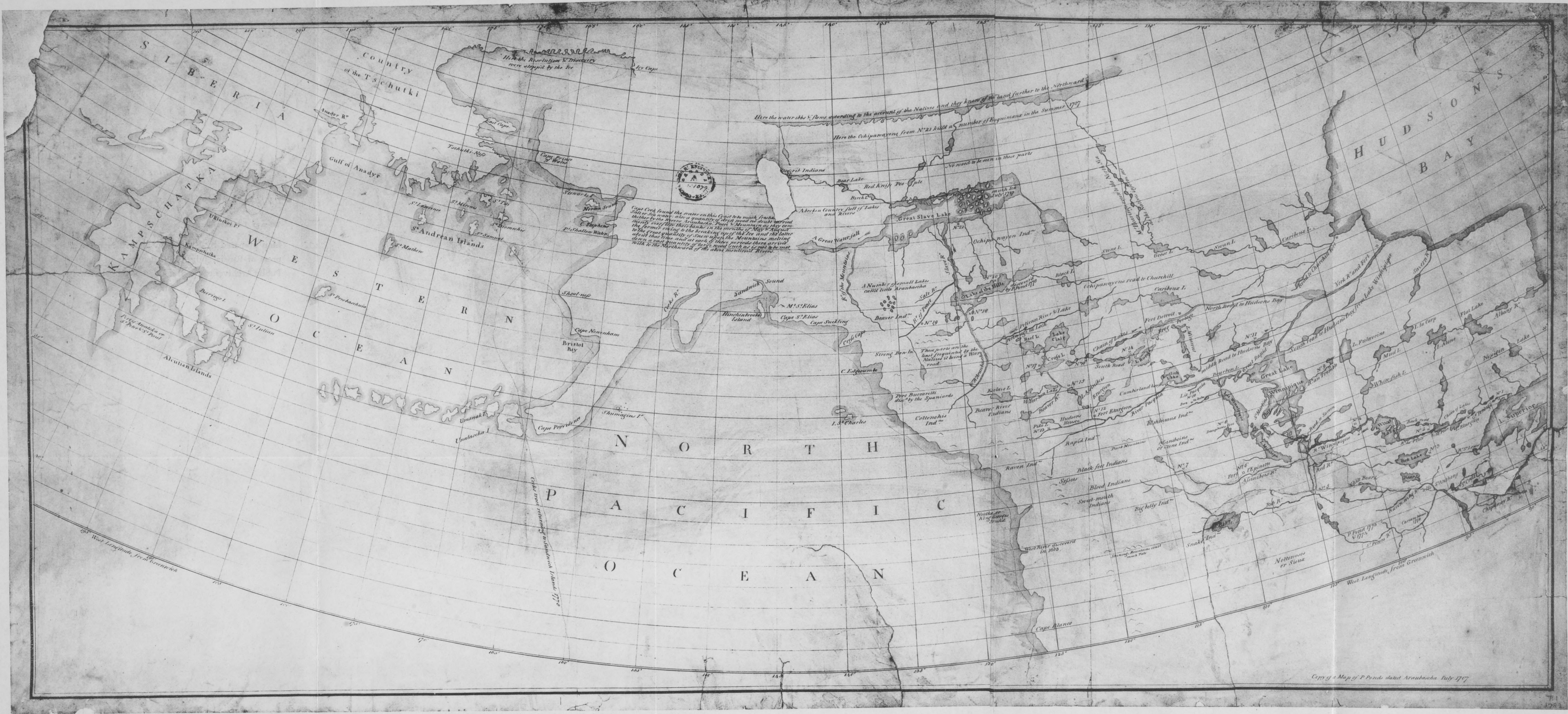
Longitude West from LONDON.

Peter Pond, Fur Trader & Explorer

by Henry R. Wagner

Map Number Three

Map prepared by Peter Pond for presentation to the Empress of Russia, July 1787. Facsimile of the copy in the Public Archives of the Dominion of Canada, Ottawa.



Copy of a Map of P. Pond's dated Arachacha July 1767

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